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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE TYGART'S VALLEY AND CHEAT MOUNTAIN CAMPAIGN—BATTLE OF GREENBRIER RIVER, OR CAMP BARTOW—BATTLE OF ALLEGHANY MOUNTAIN.

THE unsatisfactory condition of military operations on the line from Staunton to Parkersburg, as well as on that from Staunton to the Kanawha, during the month of July, was the cause of great anxiety both to the Virginia government and to that of the Confederacy. Reinforcements were hurried forward on both lines, especially to northwestern Virginia on the Staunton and Parkersburg line, where the larger Federal force had been concentrated. After the death of Gen. R. S. Garnett and the retreat of his forces, the command of the army of the Northwest was, on the 14th of July, assumed by Brig.-Gen. H. R. Jackson, of Georgia, who established his headquarters at Monterey, 47 miles west of Staunton, and pushed his advance across Alleghany mountain to the Greenbrier river. Another column having been ordered to the Huntersville and Huttonsville road, mainly the brigade of Brig.-Gen. W. W. Loring, that officer was, as the ranking one, assigned on the 20th of July to the command of the army of the Northwest, which included the forces on both the Monterey and the Huntersville lines which had a common objective in the Federal force on Cheat mountain and near Huttonsville. General Loring reached Monterey on the 22d day of July and assumed command.

When Loring reached Monterey he found the army of the Northwest thus distributed: Col. Edward Johnson, with the Twelfth Georgia and Anderson's Virginia Lee battery, were on Alleghany mountain, with pickets at Greenbrier river; Col. Albert Rust's Third Arkansas and Col. John B. Baldwin's Fifty-second Virginia were in supporting distance between Alleghany mountain and Monterey; Col. S. V. Fulkerson's Thirty-seventh Virginia, Col. William B. Taliaferro's Twenty-third Virginia, and Col. W. C. Scott's Forty-fourth Virginia were

at Monterey, as also were Shumaker's Virginia battery and Maj. George Jackson's Fourteenth Virginia cavalry. Col. J. N. Ramsey's First Georgia and the remnant of the Twenty-fifth Virginia, under Maj. A. G. Reger, were placed at McDowell for reorganization; Col. Charles C. Lee's Thirty-seventh North Carolina and Col. William Gilham's Thirty-first Virginia, with some 2,000 men, were on the road between Huntersville and Valley mountain, with their advance at the latter place, holding the road into the head of Tygart's valley. After consultation with Gen. H. R. Jackson, it was decided that other troops which had been ordered to the Monterey line should be sent to Millboro, on the Virginia Central railroad, and thence by way of the Warm Springs to the Huntersville line.

After spending a few days at Monterey inspecting the troops and gathering information, General Loring, on the 1st of August, rode to the front, accompanied by his staff, Col. Carter Stevenson, assistant adjutant-general; Maj. A. L. Long, chief of artillery; Capt. James L. Corley, chief quartermaster; Capt. R. G. Cole, chief commissary; Lieut. H. M. Matthews, aide-de-camp, and Col. W. M. Starke, volunteer aide-de-camp. Most of these officers subsequently became distinguished; Colonel Stevenson as major-general in command of Hood's corps; Major Long as chief of artillery and brigadier-general in the Second corps of the army of Northern Virginia; Captains Corley and Cole as the chief quartermaster and the chief commissary on the staff of General Lee, and Lieutenant Matthews as governor of West Virginia. Most of these had been officers in the United States army.

After crossing Alleghany mountain, General Loring reconnoitered the enemy's position on Cheat mountain and concluded that a direct attack on that, by way of the Parkersburg road, was impracticable. He then decided to take immediate command of the force which had been ordered to rendezvous at Huntersville, and attempt to turn Cheat mountain by way of the Valley mountain pass, which Colonels Gilham and Lee had been ordered to occupy. He directed Gen. H. R. Jackson to advance his whole force of some 6,000 men to the Greenbrier river, and hold himself in readiness to co-operate when the advance should be made from Huntersville toward Beverly. General Loring then rode down the valley of the



Greenbrier to Huntersville, where he established his headquarters, about the last of July, and began to make arrangements for the proposed forward movements on the Federal forces at Huttonsville and on Cheat mountain.

Loring found at Huttonsville Col. George Maney's First Tennessee, Col. Robert Hatton's Seventh Tennessee, Col. John H. Savage's Sixteenth Tennessee, Col. John A. Campbell's Forty-eighth Virginia, Maj. John D. Munford's First Virginia battalion of regulars, Maj. W. H. F. Lee's squadron of Virginia cavalry, and Marye's and Stanley's Virginia batteries of artillery. Colonels Gilham and Lee were at Valley mountain, 28 miles west of Huntersville, with their two regiments, and Col. J. S. Burks' Forty-second Virginia and a Georgia regiment were en route from Millboro to Huntersville. The effective force on the Huntersville line was about 8,500 men, most excellent material for an efficient army, as they were all well armed and well equipped by the respective States that had sent them to the field. Most of them were skilled in the use of arms, as they had received military instruction in the volunteer companies which had been organized into regiments of State troops. Many of their officers were trained men, and all were in fine spirits and eager to be led against the enemy. It was obvious to all who were informed in reference to the position of the enemy, the intervening country, and the season of the year, that the success of the proposed movement depended altogether upon its speedy execution. General Loring had a trained staff, most of them old army officers, competent to expedite military operations. The point of vantage in the advance was already occupied by Colonel Gilham, and yet, to the surprise of every one, Loring lingered at Huntersville, giving his attention to establishing there a depot of supplies and to organizing a supply train, ignoring the facts that it was only two days' march to the enemy's position near Huttonsville; that beef cattle were abundant along the line of advance, and that so soon as Huttonsville should be reached, the road over Cheat mountain would be opened, if that position were captured, and supplies could be sent from Staunton over the Parkersburg turnpike.

The unsatisfactory results of military operations in northwestern Virginia and the constant appeals from the leading men of that region to be rid of Federal domina-

tion, induced Gen. R. E. Lee, the Confederate general-in-chief, to take the field in person and give general oversight to military affairs on the Kanawha and Beverly lines, by each of which Federal armies were overrunning a large and important portion of Virginia and persistently pressing toward Staunton and the center of the State. He first gave attention to the Beverly line. Reaching Staunton the last of July, accompanied by his aides, Col. John Augustine Washington and Capt. Walter H. Taylor, he promptly rode forward, 47 miles, to Monterey, where he spent a day conferring with Gen. H. R. Jackson and inspecting the troops there encamped, and then rode on to Huntersville, which he reached the 1st of August. At that point he remained for several days, conferring with General Loring, and, in his polite, suggestive way, urging him to advance on the enemy by way of Valley mountain. Not succeeding in this, or in gaining the information he desired in reference to the enemy in Tygart's valley, he again rode forward, 28 miles, to Valley mountain, at the head of Tygart's valley, which had been occupied by Colonel Gilham's command for over a week, and there established his headquarters on the 8th of August. Maj. W. H. F. Lee accompanied him with his battalion of cavalry, which was at once put on outpost duty. Without delay, General Lee hastened to inform himself, by personal reconnoissances and through scouts, concerning the condition of affairs in the Federal army in his front and the topographic conditions of the immediate field of action; at the same time taking general oversight of operations on the Kanawha line by constant correspondence with Generals Wise and Floyd, who were there in command.

General Loring joined General Lee at Valley mountain about the 12th of August, and as he was in immediate command of the troops on the Monterey line and on the Huntersville line, which formed his division, he also proceeded to inform himself concerning the field of operations, and addressed himself to the task of preparing to dislodge Reynolds, the capable Federal commander, from his strongholds at Elkwater and on Cheat mountain, by bringing his men to the front and gathering supplies for an advance. His hesitating disposition led to delays, for one purpose and another, but he was completely baffled by the prevailing conditions of the weather. The Cheat

mountain region, the dome of the watersheds of north-western Virginia, covered by a vast and dense forest of large evergreen trees, reaches an altitude of nearly 5,000 feet, so that, naturally, it is at all times a damp and chilly region having a large rainfall. During this particular season the precipitation was very much larger than usual. During most of the months of July and August there was a steady downpour of rain, with intervals of heavy mists. In consequence of these climatic conditions, the whole country became saturated with moisture, and even the graded mountain roads, cut up by the constant passing of heavy army trains, were converted into streams of axle-deep mud, making them practically impassable for vehicles of any kind. The many unbridged streams, swollen by these steady rains, added to the difficulties of transportation. This continuous damp and chilly weather caused a great amount of sickness of every kind among the thousands of unseasoned troops here congregated, until nearly half the army was laid up, in poorly provided hospitals, and the mortality from sickness became very large. Nearly every house in all this sparsely settled country was converted into a hospital, and hospital tents, filled with sick men, were pitched all along the roads to the rear of the armies. Supply trains could not reach the camps, and so for weeks the army was on short and poor rations, and the men, many of them from cities and towns, and most of them unused to exposure and accustomed to all the comforts of good homes, were here forced to pass through an ordeal more trying than that of constant fighting; but they bore all this with uncomplaining courage, wondering why they were not led to action when they could see, from their camps, those of the enemy but a day's march away. On the 1st of September the weather conditions changed, and the dry and hot weather of the early autumn succeeded, with storms at intervals, but the roads became drier so the army could be concentrated and supplies for a few days ahead be gathered at the camps.

The topographical engineer of the army, Capt. Jed Hotchkiss, having completed a detailed map of Tygart's valley, from Valley mountain to Huttonsville, and other arrangements perfected, Loring at last yielded to Lee's urgency for an advance, and on the 8th of September issued confidential orders for



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by the Huntersville line on the enemy's camp at Elkwater, some 16 miles in front of Valley mountain, and by the Monterey line on that on Cheat mountain, some 12 miles from the Confederate camp on Greenbrier river. The two Federal camps were about 7 miles apart by a bridge path, and 17 miles by the circuitous turnpike roads.

Before divulging his plan of campaign, General Loring (doubtless by the advice of General Lee, who knew the advantages of organization), on the 8th of September issued general orders No. 10, brigading the army of the Northwest as follows: The First brigade, under Brig.-Gen. H. R. Jackson, to consist of the Twelfth Georgia, Third Arkansas, Thirty-first and Fifty-second Virginia, the Ninth Virginia battalion, the Danville, Va., artillery, and Jackson, Va., cavalry; the Second brigade, under Brig.-Gen. S. R. Anderson, to consist of the First, Seventh and Fourteenth Tennessee, Hampden artillery and Alexander's cavalry; the Third brigade, under Brig.-Gen. D. S. Donelson, to consist of the Eighth and Sixteenth Tennessee, the First and Fourteenth Georgia, and the Greenbrier, Va., cavalry; the Fourth brigade, under Col. William Gilham, to consist of the Twenty-first Virginia, Sixth North Carolina, First battalion of Confederate States provisional army, and the Troup artillery; the Fifth brigade, under Col. William B. Taliaferro, to consist of the Twenty-third, Twenty-fifth, Thirty-seventh and Forty-fourth Virginia, and Rice's and the Lee Virginia batteries; the Sixth brigade, under Col. J. S. Burks, to consist of the Forty-second and Forty-eighth Virginia and Lee's Virginia cavalry. A section of the Hampden artillery was assigned to the Third brigade, and one from the Troup artillery to the Sixth brigade, for field service. Of these six brigades, the Second, Third, Fourth and Sixth formed the Huntersville division, under the immediate command of General Loring; while the First and Fifth formed the Monterey division, under the immediate command of Gen. H. R. Jackson, the command of his own brigade devolving on Col. Albert Rust, of the Third Arkansas.

The Federal force in front of Loring at this time was the "First brigade of the army of Occupation of West Virginia," commanded by Brig.-Gen. Joseph J. Reynolds, with headquarters at Elkwater. The official



returns for October, 1861, give this brigade, present for duty, 377 officers, 10,421 men, and 26 pieces of artillery, stationed at Beverly, Elkwater and Cheat mountain. There are no official returns of the Confederate strength. Long, who was in a position to know, in his Memoirs of R. E. Lee, states that Loring's force was 6,000 and Jackson's 5,000; and that Reynolds had 2,000 in front of Jackson and 5,000 in front of Loring. So the opposing armies were about equal in strength, were both led by old army officers, and composed of the choice men of each nation. The Federals had the great advantage of fighting from behind well-located and properly-constructed fortifications, and were in comfortable camps.

On the 8th of September, General Lee communicated, confidentially, his plan of campaign for the capture of the Federal positions in his front, to begin the night of September 11th and be carried into effect by assault on the Cheat mountain fortress and attack on Elkwater camp on the morning of the 12th. General Reynolds' headquarters and most of his force were at Elkwater, 2,200 feet above tide, 11 miles due north from Loring's headquarters and the camp of the larger part of his force, at Valley mountain. It was 8 miles due east from the Elkwater camp to that on Cheat mountain, and about the same distance by a very direct bridle path, for most of the way; but it was 17 miles between the two by turnpike roads to the rear by way of Huttonsville. From Loring's camp at Valley mountain, 3,500 feet above the sea level, it was 15 miles northeast, in a direct line across numerous ridges of the densely forested Cheat mountain chain, to Jackson's camp on the Greenbrier, 3,000 feet above tide, on the Monterey line. By the nearest wagon road between the two wings of the Confederate army it was nearly 30 miles, by the rear, toward Huntersville; and by the shortest line of communication, by bridle paths, it was fully 20 miles between the two camps. A single road, the Staunton and Parkersburg turnpike, led from Jackson's camp some 14 miles westward to the Federal camp on Cheat mountain. Two good roads led from the front of Loring's camp to the Federal intrenched camp at Elkwater. One of these, the turnpike to Huttonsville, followed the Tygart valley river; the other, after crossing a divide to the westward, led down the Elkwater branch of Valley river to the Federal camp at its

mouth. By connected farm roads and bridle paths, there was a continuous route for infantry along or near a bench of fertile limestone land that shouldered out from the western side of the western Cheat mountain, by which, unobserved, the turnpike road from Monterey to Huttonsville could be reached on the top of that mountain, and communication cut between the two wings of the Federal army, some 3 miles west of the Cheat mountain fortress. These several ways of approach regulated the Confederate plan for a simultaneous attack.

Lee's first objective was the capture of the Federal garrison on the middle Cheat mountain, some 4,000 feet above the sea level. To effect this, Jackson was ordered to march an assaulting column of at least 2,000 men under Col. Albert Rust, of the Third Arkansas (who had asked to lead it, after an examination of the position), on the night of the 11th, along the turnpike to the first top of Cheat or Back Alleghany mountain, and then, at Slaven's cabin, turn to the left, by paths and through the forest and across the Main or Shaver fork of Cheat river, so as to turn the right of the Federal position and attack it, if possible, by surprise, and carry it by assault at dawn of the 12th. Jackson in person, with the remainder of his command, except a guard left at his camp, was to follow Rust, during the night of the 11th, and after the latter had left the turnpike to continue along that to the front of the Federal position, and be ready to make a demonstration or join in the attack when Rust should make his assault on the morning of the 12th. If the assault should be successful, Jackson was to leave a force to hold the captured redoubt, and, with the remainder of his army, press on to join in the attack on the left rear of the Elkwater position. The men were all to be provided with strips of white cotton cloth, to be fastened on the arm as badges, so they could recognize and not fire on each other when the attacking columns converged in co-operation.

The co-operating force under Loring was also to move on the 11th. General Anderson, with his brigade in light marching order, was to march along the byways and bridle paths on the western slope of Cheat mountain, carefully concealing his movements, during that day and the following night, so as to get possession of the turnpike, on the western top of Cheat mountain, at about

daylight of the 12th, cut the telegraph wire connecting the Federal camps, break the line of communication, and so dispose of his men as to keep back reinforcements from the Elkwater camp; guard against attack from the fort, and aid in the assault of Rust's column, if necessary, on the Cheat mountain stronghold. He was especially charged to so regulate and conceal his movements as not to interfere with the surprise of the enemy by Colonel Rust, with whose left he would seek connection. His route, 20 or more miles in length, was a difficult one, but he was well guided by Dr. Butcher, a loyal practicing physician, who knew that region well. His home was at Huttonsville, and he had retired with the Confederate forces after the battle of Rich Mountain.

General Donelson, with his brigade, was to advance by byways along the eastern side of Tygart's valley and the foot of Cheat mountain, seizing the paths and roads leading to the turnpike from that direction, and driving back any endeavor of the enemy to retard the advance of the center along the turnpike. Such of the artillery as could not be used on the flanks was to follow the turnpike, supported by Munford's battalion and followed by part of Gilham's brigade. The brigade of Colonel Burks was to march across to the Elkwater road and follow that, as the left wing of the advance, guarding that flank, having Lee's cavalry on its flank and rear and ready to make an attack on the enemy's outposts if opportunity should offer. The supply trains were to follow along the main road. On the 9th General Jackson issued orders from Greenbrier river that the brigades of Rust and Fulkerson should draw four days' rations of salt meat and hard bread; similar orders were issued by Loring.

After the plan of campaign had been adopted and the date for its inception been fixed, General Lee from "Headquarters of the Forces," Valley mountain, W. Va., September 9, 1861, issued the following stirring special order:

The forward movement announced to the army of the Northwest in special orders, No. 28, from its headquarters, of this date, gives the general commanding the opportunity of exhorting the troops to keep steadily in view the great principles for which they contend, and to manifest to the world their determination to maintain them. The eyes of the country are upon you. The safety of your homes and the lives of all you hold dear depend upon your courage and exertions. Let each man resolve to be victorious, and that the right of self-government, liberty and peace shall in him find a defender. The progress of this army must be forward.



On the 9th, General Lee wrote confidentially to Gen. John B. Floyd, commanding the army of the Kanawha:

Great efforts have been made to place this column in marching condition. Although the roads are continuous tracks of mud, in which the wagons plunge to their axles, I hope the forces can be united, with a few days' supply of provisions, so as to move forward on Thursday, the 12th instant. I therefore advise you of the probability that on your part you may be prepared to take advantage of it, and if circumstances render it advisable, to act on your side.

On the 8th, Reynolds sent a strong detachment to reconnoiter Loring's front and learn what was going on in his camp. In the early morning of the 9th these encountered Loring's pickets, 4 miles in his front at Marshall's store, in a lively skirmish, in which several were killed on both sides. The Federals then retired to Conrad's store, where a large advance guard was established.

On the morning of the 11th, Lee's forward movement began by the successive marching of Loring's four columns, as provided in the plan of attack. The central column, that moving down by the Huttonsville turnpike, which Lee and Loring accompanied, routed the Federal outpost at Conrad's store, some 8 miles in front. The Federal pickets fell back toward Elkwater, contending all the way with Loring's advance.

Jackson's men marched that night, and all the preliminary movements of the campaign were promptly and admirably executed, notwithstanding the rough topography and other difficulties of the various lines of march and the cold and heavy rain that began during the night, which not only increased the darkness, in the remarkably dense forest through which Rust had to make his way, but swelled the cold waters of the many tributaries of Cheat river, and that river itself, which his column had to cross and even to march in. Each of the co-operating commands was at its appointed place before the dawn of September 12th, and the enemy had not discovered their movements. Generals Lee and Loring, with the brigades of Gilham and Burks and the artillery and cavalry, were in the near front and on the right of the Elkwater camp; Donelson had gained its left and left rear, capturing a regiment there on picket guarding that flank and the way to Cheat mountain; Anderson was on the turnpike, on the western top of Cheat, had cut the telegraph, and was in position to block the coming of reinforcements from Elkwater, or an attack from the

Cheat mountain fort; Rust had overcome the almost insurmountable difficulties of his march through the forest, which his men had courageously endured, and had his command in front of the right of the Cheat mountain fortress, on the same ridge, and in the road in its rear, and was ready for the assault; while Jackson was in position near Cheat river, in the immediate front of the frowning redoubts. All were anxiously awaiting the opening of the fire of Rust's assault as the signal for a general attack, but the dawn came and passed, and no sound was heard from Cheat mountain.

Early on the morning of the 12th, Col. Nathan Kimball, of the Fourteenth Indiana, who was in command of the Federals on Cheat mountain, started a supply wagon train toward the Elkwater camp. About three-quarters of a mile from his camp, that train was attacked by the left of Rust's command, which had gained his rear. Informed of this, Kimball at once took two companies to drive away the attacking party, supposing it to be merely a scout. He deployed his men as skirmishers, and they advanced and developed the presence of Rust in force. Kimball claims that his force, by a vigorous fire, drove away the Confederates, who "threw aside guns, clothing and everything that impeded their progress." At the same time Kimball sent forward a strong detail to open the way to his picket on the path leading to Elkwater, which, without his knowing it, had been cut off by Anderson. This detail met Anderson's force, on the western Cheat mountain, nearly 3 miles from the Federal camp and joined in an engagement which, Kimball claims, drove the Confederates back, aided by the picket which had been cut off but now came up and attacked Anderson's rear.

At this juncture Kimball was informed that the Confederates were in his front, to the east of his camp, and had captured a picket of 35 men; and that his two companies that had attacked Rust's left were driving him to the Federal right flank. Kimball then advanced a strong force from his front to move up Cheat river and fall on Rust's right, 2 miles above the bridge, which he says forced Rust to retreat. Kimball claimed that he was attacked by nearly 5,500 men, which he engaged and repulsed with less than 300. His report of the 14th concludes: "I think my men have done wonders, and ask



God to bless them. The woods are literally covered with the baggage, coats and haversacks of the enemy. Though almost naked, my command is ready to move forward." Reynolds, who had been taken by surprise by Lee's advance, says in his official report: "So matters rested at dark on the 12th, with heavy forces in front and in plain sight of both posts, communication cut off, and the supply train for the mountains loaded with provisions that were needed."

Colonel Rust, at 10 p. m. of September 13th, wrote to General Loring from Camp Bartow, to which he had returned, in obedience to undated instructions from Gen. H. R. Jackson, which read:

Dear Colonel: Return into camp with your command. So soon as you arrive, address a letter to General Loring, explaining the failure and the reasons of it. Show this to Captain Neill, quartermaster, and let him at once furnish an express ready to take your letter by the near route. If possible, get the postmaster, Mr. Arbogast, to go, and go rapidly and at once. Say in your letter that I am in possession of the first summit of Cheat mountain, and in hopes of something going on in Tygart's valley, and shall retain command of it until I receive orders from headquarters. It may bring on an engagement, but I am prepared, and shall whip them if they come. P. S.—I cannot write here. Enclose this scrawl in your own letter. You had better return yourself at once to camp, leaving your command to follow. We had several skirmishes yesterday and killed several of the enemy.

It appears, from this letter, that General Jackson wrote it on the morning of the 13th, after hearing from Rust of the failure of his movement; that Rust, on receipt of it, returned to his old camp, followed by his command, which probably reached there some time during the night of the 13th. Rust's letter to Loring reads:

The expedition against Cheat mountain failed. My command consisted of between 1,500 and 1,600 men. Got there at the appointed time, notwithstanding the rain. Seized a number of their pickets and scouts. Learned from them that the enemy was between 4,000 and 5,000 strong, and they reported them to be strongly fortified. Upon a reconnoissance, their representations were fully corroborated—a fort or block-house on the point or elbow of the road, intrenchments on the south, and outside of the intrenchments and all around up to the road heavy and impassable abatis, if enemy were not behind them. Colonel Barton, my lieutenant-colonel and all the field officers declared it would be madness to make an attack. We learned from the prisoners they were aware of your movements, and had been telegraphed for reinforcements, and I heard three pieces of artillery pass down toward your encampment while we were seeking to make an assault upon them.

I took the assistant commissary, and for one regiment I found



upon his person a requisition for 930 rations; also a letter indicating they had very little subsistence. I brought only one prisoner back with me. The cowardice of the guard (not Arkansan) permitted the others to escape. Spies had evidently communicated our movements to the enemy. The fort was completed, as reported by the different prisoners examined separately, and another in process of construction. We got near enough to see the enemy in the trenches beyond the abatis. The most of my command behaved admirably. Some I would prefer to be without upon any expedition.

General Jackson requests me to say that he is in possession of the first summit of Cheat mountain, and hopes you are doing something in Tygart's valley, and will retain command of it until he receives orders from your quarters. My own opinion is, that there is nothing to be gained by occupying that mountain. It will take a heavy force to take the pass, and at a heavy loss. I knew the enemy had four times my force; but for the abatis we would have made the assault. We could not get to them to make it. The general says in his note to me, his occupying Cheat mountain may bring on an engagement, but he is prepared, and will whip them if they come. I see from the postscript that he requests his note to me to be enclosed to you. I can only say that all human power could do toward success in my expedition failed of success. The taking of the picket looked like a providential interposition. I took the first one myself, being at the head of the column when I got to the road.

General Lee held his positions in Tygart's valley on the 12th and 13th and during a portion of the 14th, awaiting information from Rust, which he received through the preceding letter, on the morning of the 14th, after which he issued the following special order:

Camp on Valley River, Va., September 14, 1861.

The forced reconnoissance of the enemy's positions, both at Cheat mountain pass and on Valley river, having been completed, and the character of the natural approaches and the nature of the artificial defenses exposed, the army of the Northwest will resume its former position at such time and in such manner as General Loring shall direct, and continue its preparations for further operations. The commanding general experienced much gratification at the cheerfulness and alacrity displayed by the troops in this arduous operation. The promptitude with which they surmounted every difficulty, driving in and capturing the enemy's 'pickets' on the fronts examined and exhibiting that readiness for attack, gives assurance of victory when a fit opportunity offers.

R. E. LEE, General Commanding.

Gen. A. L. Long, in his Memoirs, referring to Colonel Rust's attack of September 12th, writes:

It was anxiously expected from early dawn throughout the day. On every side was continuously heard, "What has become of Rust?" "Why don't he attack?" "Rust must have lost his way!" The Tennesseans under Anderson became so impatient that they requested to be led to the attack without waiting for Rust. But Anderson thought that he must be governed by the letter of his instruc-

and declined granting the request of his men. . . . Anderson and Donelson, finding that their situation was becoming critical, being liable to discovery and being between two superior forces, rejoined Loring on the 13th.

Colonel Rust's letter to General Loring plainly shows (notwithstanding the fact that he had himself, after an examination of the Federal position on Cheat mountain, advised General Lee to make the attack, as planned, and had requested, as a personal favor, that he might lead it with his own regiment and such other troops as might be assigned to him) that his courage failed him when he came in sight of the fortifications on Cheat mountain, and that he, unwisely, "took counsel of his fears" by giving heed to the exaggerated statements of the Federal prisoners, and did not even make an effort to attack, or an attempt to carry the position by assault. He makes no mention of having gained the road in the rear of the Federal position, or of having had an engagement there, as Colonel Kimball reports, which first revealed his presence. The meager Federal reports clearly indicate that his movement had not been discovered; that his presence was a complete surprise, and that if he had made a bold assault at the appointed time, he would, undoubtedly, have captured the Federal stronghold, and that the combined attack that would then have been made on the Elkwater camp would have completely routed the rest of the Federal army and given to General Lee's able plan of campaign a great victory—one that would have yielded most important results in northwestern Virginia, changed the condition of State affairs in that direction, and had a most important bearing upon subsequent military operations. The very men then led by Rust, later on assaulted and captured far more formidable works.

After issuing his special order of September 14th, General Lee returned to Valley mountain, and the two wings of the army of the Northwest returned to their previous encampments. Although deeply mortified at the failure of his campaign, General Lee did not complain of those who were the cause of it; then, as afterward, when campaigns upon a grander scale were partial failures, he either said nothing, or assumed that he himself was responsible for results.

From Valley mountain, on the 17th of September, he wrote to Governor Letcher:

I was very sanguine of taking the enemy's works on last Thursday morning. I had considered the subject well. With great effort the troops intended for the surprise had reached their destination, having traversed 20 miles of steep, rugged mountain paths, and the last day through a terrible storm, which lasted all night and in which they had to stand drenched to the skin in the cold rain. Still, their spirits were good. When the morning broke, I could see the enemy's tents on Valley river at the point on the Huttonsville road just below me. It was a tempting sight. We waited for the attack on Cheat mountain, which was to be the signal, till 10 a. m.; the men (Federals) were cleaning their unserviceable arms. But the signal did not come. All chance for surprise was gone. The provisions of the men had been destroyed the preceding day by the storm. They had nothing to eat that morning, could not hold out another day, and were obliged to be withdrawn. The party sent to Cheat mountain to take that in the rear had also to be withdrawn. The attack to come off from the east side failed from the difficulties of the way; the opportunity was lost and our plan discovered. It is a grievous disappointment to me, I assure you. But for the rain-storm I have no doubt but that it would have succeeded. This, Governor, is for your own eye. Please do not speak of it; we must try again.

Our greatest loss is the death of my dear friend, Colonel Washington. He and my son were reconnoitering the front of the enemy. They came unawares upon a concealed party, who fired upon them within 20 yards, and the colonel fell pierced by three balls. My son's horse received three shots, but he escaped on the colonel's horse. His zeal for the cause to which he had devoted himself carried him, I fear, too far.

We took some 70 prisoners and killed some 25 or 30 of the enemy. Our loss was small besides what I have mentioned. Our present difficulty is the roads. It has been raining in these mountains about six weeks. It is impossible to get along. It is that which has paralyzed all our efforts.

This "forced reconnoissance" made known to General Lee that only Reynolds' brigade was in Loring's front, and that Rosecrans had stolen away with the larger part of his command. When he returned to Valley mountain, on the 15th of September, he had report from Floyd of the engagement at Carnifax Ferry, on the 10th, and learned what had become of Rosecrans. Apprehensive that the bickerings of Floyd and Wise on the Kanawha line would lead to further disasters, now that Rosecrans had added his force to that of Cox, Lee left Valley mountain, about the 19th, and hastened to that line by way of Marlinton and Lewisburg.

On the 14th, Loring made demonstrations on Reynolds at Elkwater, then, late in the day, retired to Conrad's at Valley Head, where he halted during the 15th, hoping that the enemy would follow and attack him. As he did



not come, Loring marched late that night toward his old camp at Valley mountain, which he reached early in the morning of the 16th. Jackson remained in front of the Cheat mountain redoubt on the 14th and 15th, threatening to attack, especially on the 15th, when he made a demonstration on the Federal left; after which, at night, he returned to his Greenbrier river camp.

Shortly after General Lee left Valley mountain he sent back orders to Loring to send reinforcements to Floyd. Loring was very ill, and the doctor would not allow him to be disturbed. A council of brigade and regimental commanders was called, that decided that the army should march at once for the relief of Floyd, leaving Gilham's brigade to cover the movement and take care of the 1,500 sick that were then in and near the camp. The march began promptly, and Gilham addressed himself to the hard task of removing the sick, the stores and his brigade equipage to Huntersville over nearly impassable roads. The division quartermaster failed to furnish sufficient transportation before the Federals appeared, the last of September, in full force, in his front and drove in his pickets. He made dispositions to repel an attack during a torrent-like downpour of rain. Early the next morning Gilham retired from Valley mountain toward Huntersville, taking his remaining sick and such stores as he had transportation for and destroying the remainder. The Federals did not follow.

After the withdrawal of the larger part of the army of the Northwest to the Kanawha line, the opposing forces on the Staunton-Beverly line remained quiet, mainly because of the condition of the almost impassable roads and of the constant rains; the Federal forces in their Cheat mountain and Elkwater fortifications, and at Huttonsville and Beverly on their line of communication toward Grafton; and the Monterey division of the Confederate forces at Camp Bartow, on the Staunton and Parkersburg turnpike, in the valley of the Greenbrier, 12 miles east from the Federal fortress on Cheat mountain, and on the Huntersville and Beverly line at Valley mountain, with detachments on the road to its base of supplies at Millboro depot.

The portion of the army of the Northwest left on the line leading to Beverly was in command of Brig.-Gen. Henry R. Jackson, with headquarters at Camp Bartow.

The force at that camp consisted of the Third Arkansas, the First and Twelfth Georgia, the Twenty-third, Thirty-first and Forty-fourth, Virginia regiments, the Twenty-fifth and Ninth Virginia battalions, the Virginia batteries of Shumaker and Anderson, and Sterrett's Churchville, Va., cavalry; while in its rear, near the summit of Alleghany mountain, guarding its flank and line of communication to Staunton, was the Fifty-second Virginia, under Col. John B. Baldwin. The morning report of October 2d showed that this command had about 1,800 men for duty. The left of General Jackson's command, on the Huntersville and Beverly line, was composed of the Twenty-first Virginia, under Col. William Gilham, located at Valley mountain and guarding that approach to Huntersville, with the Thirty-seventh Virginia, under Col. S. V. Fulkerson, in his rear guarding the line of communication to Millboro depot and Jackson's left flank.

At midnight of October 2d, Brig.-Gen. J. J. Reynolds, with 5,000 Federal troops of all arms, marched from his Cheat mountain fortress along the Staunton and Parkersburn turnpike to make, as the Federal commander reports, "an armed reconnoissance of the enemy's position on Greenbrier river 12 miles in advance." His force was composed of nine regiments of Ohio and Indiana infantry, two and a half batteries of artillery, and three companies of cavalry, all with four days' cooked rations in their haversacks. The numbers of the attacking column and the provision of rations indicate, very clearly, that the object in view was more than a mere reconnoissance. The leader was doubtless fully informed as to the numbers and disposition of the opposing Confederate forces, and knew that a large portion of the army of the Northwest had been withdrawn to the Kanawha line. It was, evidently, his intention to attempt to drive the Confederates from Camp Bartow and pursue them toward Staunton, and thus secure for himself an advanced position for better winter quarters, either on Alleghany mountain or farther to the east, and get in more direct communication with the Federal force in the valley of the South Branch of the Potomac; or, having driven the Confederates from their partially constructed works and which they were actively engaged in completing, to move down the Greenbrier and fall upon the rear of Fulkerson and Gilham, on the Huntersville line,

and so open that route for an advance from Tygart's valley to threaten the Virginia Central railroad.

About daylight of the 3d, the Federal advance, a whole regiment, drove in the Confederate pickets near the eastern foot of Cheat mountain and followed them across the valley of the Greenbrier to within a mile of Camp Bartow, where it encountered, at about 7 a. m., the grand guard of about 100 men, under Col. Edward Johnson, of the Twelfth Georgia, admirably posted. This small force stubbornly resisted and held the Federals in check for nearly an hour, and did not yield its position until Reynolds deployed a second regiment to move on its right flank and opened six guns on its left; it then withdrew, still skirmishing, in good order, to the main line. This well-managed skirmish, the opening of a brilliant career for its then unknown commander, dampened the ardor of the Federal advance, but encouraged the small Confederate force which had it in full view from the line of its intrenchments on the foot of the western slope of the Alleghany mountain, and aroused their enthusiasm as they repeatedly cheered its successful resistance.

The Confederate intrenchments, which were in process of construction but as yet very incomplete, fronted the south fork of the Greenbrier, on each side of the Staunton and Parkersburg turnpike as that descends the western slope of Alleghany mountain to Yeager's, a wayside inn on the bank of the river. The center of this position was held by the brigade of Col. William B. Taliaferro, consisting of his Twenty-third Virginia, Col. William C. Scott's Forty-fourth Virginia, the Twenty-fifth Virginia battalion under Capt. John C. Higginbotham, and Shumaker's battery of four guns, one of these under Rice. At about 8 a. m., Reynolds deployed in front of this center a large body of infantry with two batteries, and opened on Taliaferro with a vigorous and persistent artillery fire. As this produced no effect except to draw a sharp and well-directed reply from Shumaker's guns, Reynolds, at about 9:30, moved a strong column from the woods, in which his main body was concealed, to turn Jackson's left. This column crossed the narrow valley and the shallow South Fork and assaulted the Confederate left, under Colonel Rust, who held it with his Third Arkansas, Col. William L. Jackson's Thirty-first Virginia, the Ninth Virginia battalion under Capt. J. A. Robertson, and



Anderson's two field guns. These met the assault from their intrenchments along the road leading to Green Bank, and drove it back in confusion and with loss. Two Federal guns opened spitefully upon Rust after this, but met with a vigorous response from Anderson.

While keeping up this artillery fire upon the Confederate left and center, Reynolds organized an assault, with the larger portion of his command, upon the Confederate right, which was held by Col. Edward Johnson with his First Georgia, Col. J. N. Ramsey's Twelfth Georgia, and Capt. F. F. Sterrett's Churchville, Va., cavalry. Watching this movement as it defiled along the edge of the woods on the steep hill bordering the west bank of the river, in his front, Jackson directed Johnson to advance the Twelfth Georgia regiment to the immediate bank of the South Fork, to reinforce its line of skirmishers which was engaged in a desultory fire which harassed the Federal column as it advanced; these having the advantage of position opened a galling fire on the enemy. At the same time Shumaker opened two of his guns on the woods, through which the Federal column was advancing, with such effect, as General Jackson reports, "that in a short time the unmistakable evidence of their rout became apparent. Distinctly could their officers be heard, with words of mingled command, remonstrance and entreaty, attempting to rally their battalions into line and to bring them to the charge; but they could not be induced to reform their broken ranks, nor to emerge from the cover of the woods in the direction of our fire. Rapidly and in disorder they returned into the turnpike, and soon thereafter the entire force of the enemy—artillery, infantry and cavalry—retreated in confusion along the road and adjacent fields, leaving behind them, at different points, numbers of their killed, guns, knapsacks, canteens, etc. Among other trophies taken was a stand of United States colors." This engagement lasted from 7 in the morning to 2:30 in the afternoon. The Confederate loss was 6 killed, 33 wounded and 13 missing; an aggregate of 52. The Federal loss was 8 killed and 36 wounded; an aggregate of 43. Colonel Baldwin with the Fifty-second, who had been ordered from the rear, came up with his command just at the close of the engagement.

General Reynolds says in his report: "We disabled

three of the enemy's guns, made a thorough reconnoissance, and, after having fully and successfully accomplished the object of this expedition, retired leisurely and in good order to Cheat mountain, arriving at sundown, having marched 24 miles and been under the enemy's fire four hours. The enemy's force was about 9,000, and we distinctly saw heavy reinforcements of infantry and artillery arrive while we were in front of the works." Reynolds did not disable any of the Confederate guns. A ball stuck in one of them so it could not be rammed down, and that was retired. Captain Shumaker managed his guns with rare skill. They were without the protection of epaulements, so he constantly shifted them whenever the enemy obtained their range and when he could employ them to more advantage in firing on the Federal column, as his guns were all of short range, while most of theirs were of long range.

The secretary of war, under date of October 12th, wrote to General Jackson: "I congratulate both yourself and the officers and men under your command for your brilliant conduct on this occasion and your successful defense of the important position held by you against a force so superior. The President joins me in the expression of the satisfaction we both feel in finding our confidence in you and your command so fully justified."

On the 30th of September the Confederate force under Colonel Gilham evacuated Valley mountain, and on October 2d took position on Elk mountain, where it remained until after the battle of Greenbrier River. After that it fell back to Marlin's bottom (now Marlinton), on the Greenbrier, where it threw up fortifications and remained until late in November, when that portion of the army of the Northwest, with the exception of the cavalry left at Huntersville, was withdrawn and sent to Winchester, to Gen. T. J. Jackson, who had, on the 4th of November, assumed command of the Valley district, which embraced Alleghany mountain.

On the 21st of November, Gen. H. R. Jackson evacuated Camp Bartow and retired to the summit of Alleghany mountain, leaving only cavalry at Camp Bartow to scout the enemy's front. On the 22d, from his camp on the mountain, General Jackson ordered Col. Edward Johnson, of the Twelfth Georgia, to take command of the garrison on the summit of the mountain, to consist of the

Twelfth Georgia, the Thirty-first, Fifty-second and Twenty-fifth Virginia regiments and the Ninth Virginia battalion, Flournoy's company of Virginia cavalry, and Anderson's and Miller's Virginia batteries, and at once entering upon the duties of his command, take "the necessary steps to insure the safety and comfort of his troops." The Forty-fourth Virginia and a section of Rice's battery, located on the road to Monterey, were made part of his command. Previous to that time, on the 18th of October, General Jackson had ordered the construction of huts on the top of Alleghany mountain within lines of fortification, laid out under the direction of Lieut.-Col. Seth M. Barton, of the Third Arkansas. These were gladly occupied by Johnson's men, who had been suffering from the inclemency of the season. The same orders directed Col. William B. Taliaferro to take command at Monterey with the First Georgia, the Third Arkansas and the Twenty-third and Thirty-seventh Virginia, with cavalry to scout down the branches of the Potomac toward Petersburg and Moorefield.

At about the time of the withdrawal of the Confederate troops to Alleghany mountain, General Reynolds resigned the command of the Cheat Mountain district of the Federal army to Brig.-Gen. R. H. Milroy. At about the same time General Kelley was placed in command of the Baltimore & Ohio railroad district, and with a Federal force moved up the South Branch valley and took possession of Romney, thus threatening the line of communication from Alleghany mountain to Staunton, since Monterey, in that valley and on that line, was but 70 miles, by a good road, from Romney. Kelley asked McClellan for 10,000 men, saying that with these he could go up the South Branch valley and, falling on the rebels, "utterly destroyed their whole force at Monterey and Greenbrier." Pierpoint, the bogus governor of Virginia, also urged the same thing, saying that a combined movement by Reynolds and Kelley would "bag all the rebels on Cheat mountain." (He meant Alleghany mountain; being mixed in his geography.)

Ambitious of winning reputation on the line to Staunton on which his predecessor had signally failed at Greenbrier river, Milroy, without waiting for co-operation with Kelley, and doubtless informed, through his numerous traitorous West Virginia spies and deserters from the army of



the Northwest, that the larger portion of the Confederate force which had been on the line of the Greenbrier had been withdrawn toward Staunton, and that there only remained the small brigade of Col. Edward Johnson on the summit of Alleghany mountain, 14 miles east from the Greenbrier river and about the same distance west from Monterey, planned an attack upon Johnson, who was now left in command, Gen. H. R. Jackson having been relieved; and for this purpose collected all the troops in his district, from Belington, Beverly, Huttonsville and Elkwater, and joined them with those at Cheat mountain, making a command of about 5,000 men of all arms. With these he marched from Cheat mountain fortress very early in the morning of December 12th to attack Camp Alleghany.

On that same 12th of December, Colonel Johnson sent out a scouting party of 106 men under Maj. J. D. H. Ross, of the Fifty-second Virginia, with instructions to ambuscade a point on the turnpike beyond Camp Bartow, and, if possible, by a demonstration with a few of his men, draw the Federals into it. His pickets were near Slaven's cabin, near the top of the eastern Cheat mountain, when Milroy's advance appeared. These retired and drew that into the ambuscade, where it received a deadly volley from Ross' command. Milroy at once deployed in force and advanced upon the scouting party, but these, in the meantime, retired, and reaching Camp Alleghany about dark, reported the Federal advance and thus gave Colonel Johnson opportunity to make preparation to meet it.

Colonel Johnson's command of about 1,200 men at Camp Alleghany consisted of his own regiment, the Twelfth Georgia under Lieut.-Col. Z. T. Conner, the Thirty-first Virginia under Maj. F. M. Boykin, Jr., two companies of the Fifty-second Virginia under Maj. J. D. H. Ross, the Ninth Virginia battalion under Lieut.-Col. G. W. Hansbrough, the Twenty-fifth Virginia battalion under Maj. A. J. Reger, and eight 6-pounders of the Lee battery under Capt. P. B. Anderson and the Rockbridge battery under Capt. John Miller. After the close of the engagement the Forty-fourth Virginia arrived, but did not become engaged. The Federal force was made up of the Ninth and Thirteenth Indiana, the Twenty-fifth and Thirty-second Ohio, the Second West Virginia

and a squadron of cavalry, in so far as can be ascertained, as there are no published reports but from one colonel.

About 4 o'clock on the morning of the 13th the Confederate pickets fired on the Federals coming up the mountain. Aroused by this, Colonel Johnson at once turned out the whole of his command and placed it in position to meet an attack. The Ninth and Twenty-fifth Virginia battalions and the Thirty-first Virginia were ordered to the crest of the mountain on the right, to guard against approach from that quarter. No defenses had been thrown up on that ridge. Some fields, with stumps and felled timber beyond, reached this crest of the mountain. A portion of the enemy, led by a Union man from western Virginia who was familiar with the locality, turned to the left about a mile down the turnpike and reached the field in front of Johnson's right by a trail which led into a road coming into a field near his rear. Hansborough's pickets discovered this approach and reported the enemy coming in strong force. They advanced, some 2,000 men, in line of battle at about 7:15 a. m. and promptly opened a terrific musketry fire, which was bravely responded to by the 300 Confederates on the crest of the ridge. As soon as this firing began, Johnson ordered two companies of the Twelfth Georgia, that had been posted about a quarter of a mile down the turnpike, to move to the support of the right; he also sent three other companies, from the same indomitable regiment, to join in holding this important position against such great odds. The Georgians gallantly moved up and lengthened the line on its left, receiving a hot fire from the enemy from behind the fallen trees and the standing stumps on the opposite side of the field in front. The Federals had, in the meantime, forced back the extreme Confederate right, but when the Georgians came up with a shout, those who had so well held the field rallied and moved upon the enemy at the same time. This brave dash was, for a time, checked by the Federals from the strong positions which they held behind the stumps and the fallen timber, but it was not driven back. It steadily advanced, cheered by its officers, who fought side by side with their men and led them on to the conflict. General Johnson reports: "I never witnessed harder fighting; the enemy, behind trees, with their long range arms, at first had decidedly the advantage, but our men soon came up

to them and drove them from their cover. I cannot speak in terms too exaggerated of the unflinching courage and dashing gallantry of those 500 men who contended, from 7:15 a. m. until 1:45 p. m., against an immensely superior force of the enemy, and finally drove them from their positions and pursued them a mile or more down the mountain." The losses on this wing were severe in killed and wounded, among both officers and men; it could not be otherwise where such brave fighting was done.

The left of General Johnson's position had been intrenched and there were posted Anderson's and Miller's eight guns and the troops that were first turned out in the morning—the Twelfth Georgia, the Fifty-second Virginia, and Dabney's Pittsylvania cavalry, dismounted, with carbines. About a half hour after the attack on Johnson's right, a heavy column of the enemy, led by a traitor well acquainted with the locality, approached this position by a road running along a leading ridge and toward the left of the trenches. The enemy were evidently surprised to find an intrenchment in their front, as they hesitated in approaching. Captain Anderson, as they came in sight, mistook them for Confederate pickets coming in, and rode forward telling his comrades not to fire. The Federals instantly fired a volley in which this brave soldier of three wars and many battles fell mortally wounded. The Confederates quickly responded, and their galling fire soon drove the enemy back into the brush and fallen timber, from which they kept up a constant fire which was returned with spirit, by both infantry and artillery, especially by the latter, which, stung by the death of their loved leader, poured shot and shell among them, making their position untenable and driving them from the combat, in which they were assisted by the force on the right which General Johnson drew to the left after the enemy had been repulsed from that portion of the field. The enemy fled from this combined assault and retreated down the mountain in great confusion, leaving their dead and wounded and the debacle of their retreat behind them.

Colonel Johnson concluded his official report of this engagement, dated December 19th, by saying: "Although we have reason to be thankful to God for the victory achieved over our enemies on this occasion, we can but



lament the loss of many valuable lives. Our casualties amounted to 20 killed, 96 wounded and 28 missing. Many of the missing have returned since the day of battle." In a report of December 15th, he wrote: "The enemy were totally routed and acknowledged they had been badly whipped. They were heard to accuse their officers of deceiving them, insisting that our numbers were largely superior to their own. They were much demoralized, and I hope they have received a good lesson."

The Official Records contain no report from General Milroy concerning this engagement, but the official return of Federal casualties gives 20 killed, 107 wounded and 10 missing; total, 137.

Any account of the battle of Alleghany Mountain that fails to make mention of the grandly heroic leadership of Col. Edward Johnson in that memorable engagement, fails to give prominence to the most important factor in the winning of such a decided victory over so large an attacking enemy. The men in Johnson's command were the very pick and flower of Southern soldiery. Those in the Twelfth Georgia were the best that "Empire State" of the South could furnish. The Virginia regiments were made up of the picked men from northwestern Virginia and from the Great Valley. With such men and a brave and dashing commander, success in a contest was almost certain against a large disparity of numbers; but without a leader of such character, even such soldiers would fail to win in almost any field. Colonel Johnson, in the rough dress of a mountaineer, had scouted the whole surrounding country on horseback and on foot. His men were encamped so as to be ready for action, and he was among the first to hear the firing of the pickets on the morning of the 13th, and in the same dress he, in person, promptly ordered the call to arms. When the fight began, armed with a musket, he went from one portion of the field to another, on foot, encouraging and directing his men, and when these were hard pressed, with clubbed musket in his left hand and a long club (a "grub" gathered from a farmyard) in his right, which he brandished over his head, while in thunder tones he encouraged his men to attack, he joined them in rushing upon the foe and driving them, with the bayonet and with severe loss, down the mountain side in full retreat.

His heroic and inspiring presence everywhere increased the valorous ardor of his men. His conduct on that day won for him, for all time, the name of "Alleghany Johnson."

Secretary Benjamin wrote to Brig.-Gen. Edward Johnson, on the 23d of December:

The report of the engagement of the 13th inst., in which your gallant command met and repulsed a vastly superior force with a steady valor worthy of the highest admiration, has been communicated by me to the President, and I rejoice to be made the medium of communicating to you and to your officers and men the expression of his thanks and of the great gratification he had experienced at your success. I am happy to add that the President readily and cheerfully assented to my suggestion that you should be promoted to the rank of brigadier-general as a mark of his approval of your conduct, and your nomination will accordingly this day be sent in to the Congress, and take date from the day of the battle.

On the 3d of January, 1862, Secretary Benjamin, in a letter to the President, wrote:

I have the honor to submit herewith for communication to Congress the official reports of the battle of Alleghany Mountain, in which our troops, 1,200 in number, successfully stood the assault of more than fourfold their number, and drove the enemy from the field after a combat as obstinate and as hard fought as any that has occurred during the war. . . . I doubt not that Congress on the reading of this report, will cordially concur with the Executive in the opinion that in this brilliant combat officers and men alike deserve well of their country and merit its thanks.

In consequence of this battle, which revealed the intention of Milroy to gain possession of the pass in the Alleghany mountain and form a junction with Kelley at Moorefield or Romney, if he should succeed in his attempt, General Johnson was ordered to remain at Camp Alleghany while Loring with the rest of his command was sent down the Shenandoah valley to join Stonewall Jackson at Winchester, in an expedition against Romney that would successfully checkmate Milroy's plans and intentions.